

Case 2888

Valdivianemertes Stiasny-Wijnhoff, 1923 (Nemertea): proposed conservation

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the nemertean generic name *Valdivianemertes* Stiasny-Wijnhoff, 1923, which is threatened by the senior objective synonym *Akrostomum* Grube, 1840. *Akrostomum* has not been mentioned, except as a synonym, for more than 100 years.

1. The genus *Akrostomum* Grube, 1840 (p. 57) was originally established for the new nominal species *A. stannii*. The description was based upon a single preserved specimen from the Mediterranean; it clearly referred to a nemertean (and most probably a monostiliferan), but was so indeterminate that the name was listed as a nomen dubium by Gibson & Crandall (1989). However, the holotype still exists (see para. 4 below).

2. The taxon was listed uncertainly by Örsted (1843, 1844) as *Acrostomum* [sic] *stannii*, and by Diesing (1850, 1862) as *Acrostomum Stannii*. Carus (1885) also listed *A. stannii* as dubious, and suggested that *Amphiporus hastatus* McIntosh, 1873 and *Amphiporus pugnax* Hubrecht, 1879 possibly belonged to the doubtful genus '*Acrostomum*'. Hubrecht (1879) listed *A. stannii* as a synonym of *Amphiporus hastatus*, but later (1883) listed *Amphiporus hastatus* and *bioculatus* McIntosh, 1873 as synonyms of *Akrostomum stannii*. Joubin (1890, 1894) also listed *Akrostomum stannii* as a synonym of *Amphiporus hastatus*, and also (1894) used Carus's exact words (without attribution) to suggest that *Amphiporus pugnax* might belong to *Acrostomum* [sic]. Vaillant (1890, p. 601) listed *Akrostomum stannii* as a 'species indeterminata', questioning whether it was even a nemertean and (p. 609) mentioned Hubrecht's suggested synonymies. None of these authors added any new information, and all of these synonymies have been universally rejected for the past 100 years. *Amphiporus bioculatus* (sensu McIntosh), *A. hastatus* and *A. pugnax* are now regarded (Gibson & Crandall, 1989) as nomina dubia.

3. There is only one other instance of the adoption of the generic name *Akrostomum* or *Acrostomum* for a species. Diesing (1862) reported *Polia canescens* (Leuckart, 1849) as *Acrostomum canescens* but Bürger (1904) transferred this taxon to *Amphiporus* Ehrenberg, 1831. Gibson & Crandall (1989) regarded *A. canescens* as a nomen dubium.

4. Bürger was able to compare a preserved collection of specimens from Naples with Grube's fragmented specimen of *Akrostomum stannii* contained in the Berlin Natural History Museum collections, and satisfied himself that they were the same species. The specimen remains in Berlin, where it is listed as *Amphiporus stannii* (No. 1962, Holotype). Bürger published (1895a, b) a considerably expanded description of

the taxon under the name *Amphiporus staniusi*. His altered spelling of the specific name possibly resulted from confusion over the proper latinized form of the personal name but he later (1904) corrected it to *Amphiporus stannii*, listing all the earlier names as synonyms. His placement of the species in the older genus *Amphiporus* was entirely consistent with *Amphiporus* as understood at that time but not as more recently treated by Gibson & Crandall (1989, 1991), that is with *Planaria lactiflora* Johnston, 1828 as the type species (see *BZN* 48: 22–24 & Opinion 1675, *BZN* 49: 157).

5. Stiasny-Wijnhoff (1923), with insight gained through extensive studies of new expedition collections, recognized that *Amphiporus stannii*, as described by Bürger (1895a, b), and another species obtained from South Africa which Bürger (1909) had described as *Drepanophorus valdiviae*, were very closely related and so unique as to require a new genus, which she (1923, p. 643) called *Valdivianemertes*. No type material of *D. valdiviae* is known to exist. Stiasny-Wijnhoff did not designate a type species or family placement for *Valdivianemertes*, although she noted that *stannii* and *valdiviae* belong to the monostilifera. She did not mention the earlier name *Akrostomum*.

6. *Valdivianemertes* was later accepted by Friedrich (1935, 1955, 1957), Stiasny-Wijnhoff (1936), Kirsteuer (1963, 1973), Gibson (1972, 1982, 1988), Gibson & Crandall (1989) and Crandall (1993a, 1993b).

7. In a review of the genus *Valdivianemertes*, I have noted (1993a) that the generic name *Akrostomum* has not been used, except as a synonym, for over 100 years, and that *Valdivianemertes* is the name by which the genus has been recognized and understood since 1923. I retained the name *Valdivianemertes* in accordance with Article 23b of the Code, designated (p. 181) *Akrostomum stannii* Grube, 1840 as the type species, and assigned (p. 183) the genus to the family CRATENEMERTIDAE Friedrich, 1968 (p. 35) since it conforms to that diagnosis.

8. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the generic name *Akrostomum* Grube, 1840 for the purposes of the Principle of Priority but not for those of the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Valdivianemertes* Stiasny-Wijnhoff, 1923 (gender: feminine), type species by designation by Crandall (1993) *Akrostomum stannii* Grube, 1840;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *stannii* Grube, 1840, as published in the binomen *Akrostomum stannii* (specific name of the type species of *Valdivianemertes* Stiasny-Wijnhoff, 1923);
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *Akrostomum* Grube, 1840, as suppressed in (1) above;
 - (b) *Acrostomum* Örsted, 1843 (an incorrect subsequent spelling of *Akrostomum* Grube, 1840).

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